



Comprehensive Management Plan Update

A Message from the Superintendent

Aloha kakou!

Thanks to all of you for your past participation and continued interest in this effort to plan for the management of the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail. The goal of this over-175-mile national trail is to preserve Hawaiis' historic shoreline trails, their history and stories, and the features that give life to these stories—the cultural and environmental landscape. Preserving special places like these trails to experience and practice the living Hawaiian legacy and traditional lifestyle in a changing island social environment is a challenge. I have received much support and encouragement from our kupuna, cultural practitioners and conservationists, partners, land managers, scientists, educators, fishermen, surfers, beach-goers and people from the community who share much aloha for the land and the people of the land. Mahalo a nui loa to all of you!

To assure that planning and management efforts are being coordinated, a Memorandum of Understanding between Hawaii County, the State of Hawaii and the Ala Kahakai NHT is nearing finalization. Mahalo goes out to state and county officials for their cooperation and support of the trail initiative.

As you will read in the "Trail News" section of this newsletter, in addition to preparing the management plan, much of our activities over the last several years can be characterized as "foundation building." A non-profit trail association is in the process of incorporating. Research projects aimed at gathering cultural and historic information are in progress. Community-based strategic planning and partnerships



Hale Wa'a (canoe house) at Kaloko-Honokohau NHP, NPS photo

with educational organizations are underway and planning for community engagement with Park Service units along the Ala Kahakai NHT route have also commenced.

I am especially pleased to announce that the Draft Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CMP/EIS) is in the final stages of National Park Service policy review. We aim to have it available for your review and comments this summer. We will hold another series of community meetings to answer your questions, receive your comments and further refine the plan with an aim to adopting the document in early 2008.

Once the plan is approved, we will work diligently to incorporate existing managed trails used by the public such as those in the national parks, the state Ala Kahakai, and resorts, into the Ala Kahakai NHT by ensuring that their management meets the standards of the plan and marking them with the official trail marker. Please

remember to respect private property and use only trails that are managed for public use. For segments not yet open to the public, the CMP proposes the preparation of ahupua'a community-based management plans for individual trail segments. Once a segment is actively managed, then it can be marked as part of the Ala Kahakai NHT and made available to the public.

Finally, inserted in the newsletter is a mail-back postcard. Please complete it and mail it back. This will allow us to update our mailing list and plan for the printing and distribution of the CMP/EIS. You can also call 808-326-6012 to provide the same information or to get on our mailing list. Please encourage others to also sign up on our mailing list.

Aloha,

Aric Arakaki
Superintendent

Draft Comprehensive Management Plan Available this Summer

The Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail's draft Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (CMP/EIS) is in the final stages of an NPS internal review process. This summer, the draft plan will be printed and made available for your review. It will also be available on the web site:

<http://www.nps.gov/alka>

An announcement will be made on the web site and in a newsletter when the plan will be ready for public review and comment. To facilitate public comments, another round of public meetings, similar to those of 2001 and 2002, will be held later this summer.

As with all national parks and national trails, a management plan needs to be adopted to guide management actions. Given the sensitive nature of the many cultural, historic and natural features that the Ala Kahakai may come across, an environmental impact statement is also included with the CMP.

The Ala Kahakai planning team's approach to planning is ahupua'a community-based, in that the values, concerns and needs of the land and community are reflected in the plan and in its implementation. In 2001, nine public meetings were held in the Kohala, Kona, Ka'u and Hilo districts. The hiking and advocacy organization, Ē Mau Nā Ala Hele provided refreshments and support to the planning team. At these day long "open house" meetings, communities and individuals shared their concerns, issues and views on the general management of the trail. This information was compiled and five management alternatives were developed as a result.

In 2002, these management alternatives were presented to the community. These meetings resulted in the recommendation of a preferred alternative and the refinement of the five alternatives to three.

Meeting participants were asked to choose their preferred alternative. Alternative C (the ahupua'a trail system alternative) was selected as the preferred alternative since it incorporated shoreline segments of mauka-makai and other ala loa (long distance trails) within the Ala Kahakai trail corridor. Meeting participants agreed that the ahupua'a trails system provided a more accurate reflection of the historic and cultural landscape thus supporting better the purpose of the Ala Kahakai NHT designation.

Three alternatives are presented in the CMP:

Alternative A "No Action" assumes that existing programs, facilities, staffing, and funding would generally continue at their current levels. The Ala Kahakai NHT would consist of trail segments within the four national parks through which it passes and only a few other segments, most likely on state lands.

Alternative B "Single Trail" proposes the completion of a single continuous trail comprised of unaltered or verified ancient and historic portions of the ala loa (long trail) linked as needed by later pre-1892 trails, pathways, and modern connector trails. The NPS would administer the trail, but management outside of the national parks would remain with the land managing agency or landowner.

Alternative C "Ahupua'a Trail System" is the **preferred alternative**. This alternative is based on the traditional Hawaiian trail system in which multiple trail alignments within the *ahupua'a* (mountain to sea land division) are integral to land use and stewardship. While a single linear trail would be a goal, on publicly-owned lands the Ala Kahakai NHT would include inland portions of the ala loa and mauka-makai (mountain to sea) trails that would have traditionally been part of the *ahupua'a*

system. Inclusion of inland and mauka-makai trails on private lands would be voluntary for these landowners.

The CMP identifies the necessity of community partnerships to protect trail resources and provide appropriate trail user services. As a partnership endeavor, the success of this plan is not solely determined by the NPS; rather its success rests with the will and perseverance of other local government agencies, communities, organizations, neighborhood associations, and individuals who have the capacity and desire to implement this plan.

Community Vision for the Trail

The following vision for the trail was developed with the public during the scoping process. The Ala Kahakai NHT will:

- preserve ancient and historic trails within the corridor and tell the stories of those who use them
- provide access to practice traditional lifestyles and mālama 'āina (care for the land)
- protect sacred sites, historic places, and natural areas
- become a living classroom for educating Hawaii's people and visitors
- offer opportunities for community partnerships based on the ahupua'a concept
- create safe and well-kept places for spiritual, cultural, and recreational practices
- unite local communities around common goals to preserve Hawaii's culture and environment

Trail News

Through a partnership with Common Works Development Institute, Ala Kahakai NHT has provided strategic planning services and consultations for community engagement for community-based organizations, private landowners, state and county governments, and Hawaii Island national parks. Project sites include: Pu'ukoholā Heiau NHS and the caretakers cottage at Spencer Park; Pu'u Anahulu Community Association at Kīholo Bay; Kalaoa to Lanihau Landowner's Working Group; Kaloko Pond Community Co-Management; Kulana Huli Honua at Kamakahonu; and Nā Hoa Aloha O Pu'uhoonua O Hōnaunau.

Through an informal partnership with the University of Redlands, Ala Kahakai NHT has provided capacity building for the teaching of computer-based geographic information systems (GIS) at the West Hawaii Explorations Academy. Thanks to this partnership, a prototype community trail management monitoring system is under development along with the next generation of land managers.



Fishermen's Trail at Waikoloa Resort, NPS Photo

Cooperative agreements were established with the University of Hawaii's Planning Department to complete cultural landscape studies with an emphasis on identifying ancient and historic trails throughout the trail corridor.

Ala Kahakai has also provided program funds for the recordation of thousands of petroglyphs within the corridor in South Kohala that have never been documented. Volunteers Ed and Diane Stasack have given countless hours of their time and expertise. Mahalo a nui loa to these dedicated kupuna!

Got Hiking Trails?

While no segment of the trail is officially opened, the public can hike on shoreline trails located at the three national parks in West Hawaii. These are Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site, Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park and Pu'uhoonua O Hōnaunau National Historical Park. The state's Ala Kahakai Trail, our namesake, is managed by the Na Ala Hele Trails and Access Program. The public may access this trail through the county's Spencer Park and the state's Hapuna and Wailea Beach Parks. Trail access is also available through Mauna Kea, Mauna Lani, and Waikoloa resorts according to these properties' access policies. Ali'i Drive, a modified ancient trail, is also on the Ala Kahakai NHT as it passes through the town of Kailua-Kona and heading south to Keauhou.

The public is encouraged to practice safety, beware of over-exposure to the sun, hazardous ocean conditions and hike only on trails that are managed.

Tell us what you think!

There will be several opportunities to share your thoughts and ideas with us. It is important that we receive your comments on the draft plan.

You will be able to send us your comments by writing to us or by submitting your comments electronically through the Ala Kahakai web site:

<http://www.nps.gov/alka>

Under "Quicklinks," click on "Comprehensive Management Plan." This web site will include regular updates on the planning schedule, public meeting announcements, copies of newsletters and planning documents.

Public Meetings. This summer we will hold public meetings at several locations. These meetings will provide an opportunity for you to share your thoughts, ideas, values, concerns and information. The meetings schedule will be in the next newsletter and on the web site.



Lepeamoa Rock, South Kona, NPS Photo

Ala Kahakai Trail Association

A community-based non-profit organization to support the mission of the Ala Kahakai NHT is in its formation stages. Articles of incorporation are being finalized and filing for both state and federal tax exempt status is pending.

The purpose of this trail partner organization is to provide technical assistance to build or support the ahupua'a community's capacity to plan and sustain the management of their trail, conduct fundraising, sponsor events, develop partnerships amongst landowners, agencies, private organizations, and cultural groups, implement a community engagement strategy, and create educational programs.

Interim Board of Directors members are: cultural practitioners and educators: Keoki Carter, Yvonne Yarber-Carter and retired physician Ray Broggini.



National Park Service
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Contact Information

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Dates for CMP Planning Steps and Schedule

PLANNING STEP	SCHEDULE	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
1 Gather Data and Establish Goals and Vision	Spring 2003	Public Scoping Comments
2 Develop Alternatives	Summer 2004	Public Meetings and Comment on Alternatives
3 Prepare and Publish a Draft CMP/EIS --we are here--	Summer 2007	Public Meetings and Comment on Draft Report
4 Revise Draft and Publish Final CMP/EIS	Winter 2008	
5 Record of Decision	Spring 2008	



Shoreline Trail, South Kohala, NPS Photo



National Trails Day Hike on 1800 Kaupulehu Flow, North Kona, NPS Photo